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Fort Beauséjour National Historic Park

Aulac, New Brunswick
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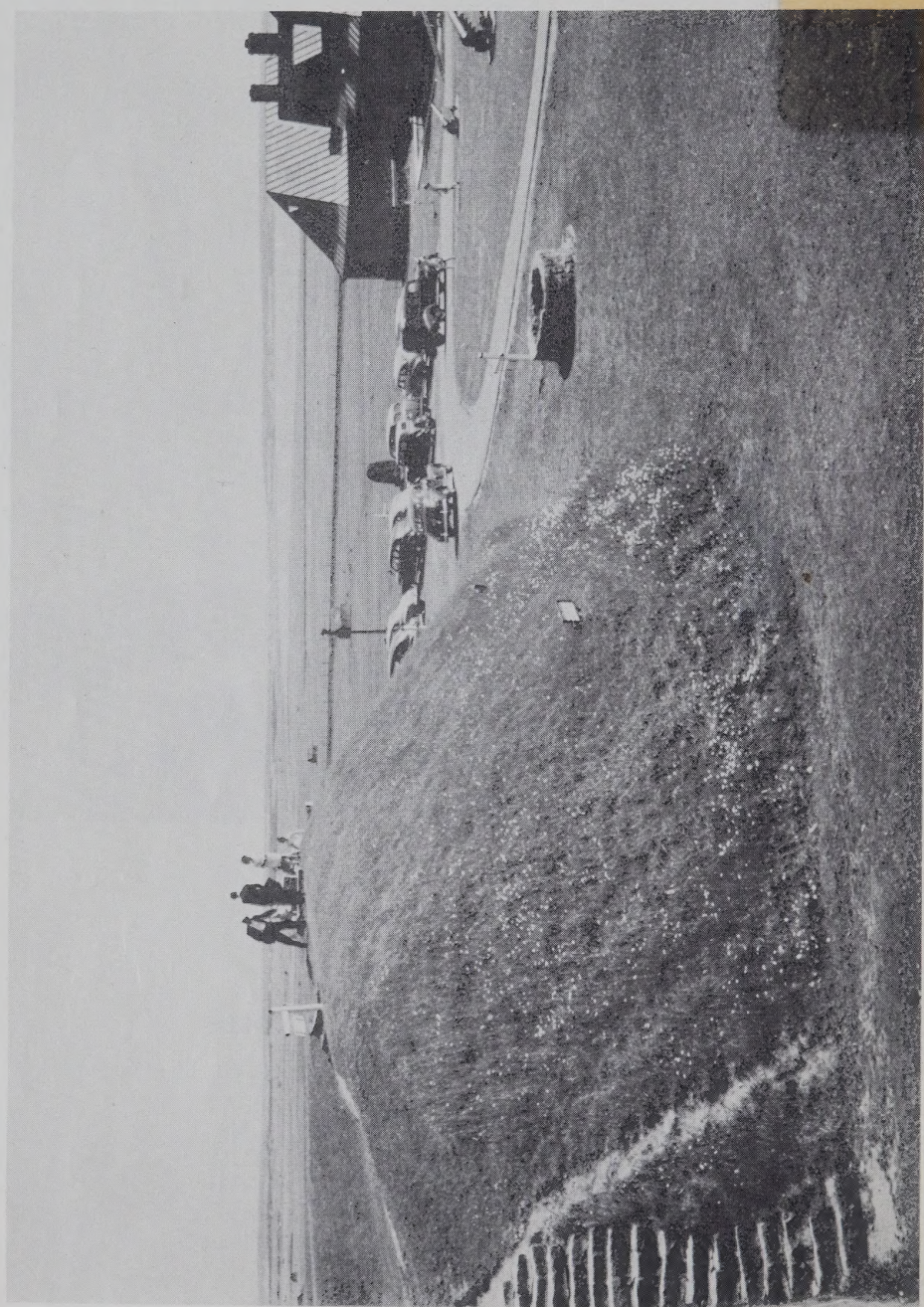


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A WISE NATION PRESERVES ITS RECORDS
- - - GATHERS UP ITS MUNIMENTS - - -
DECORATES THE TOMBS OF ITS ILLUS-
TRIOUS DEAD - - - REPAIRS ITS GREAT
PUBLIC STRUCTURES AND FOSTERS NA-
TIONAL PRIDE AND LOVE OF COUNTRY
BY PERPETUAL REFERENCE TO THE
SACRIFICES AND GLORIES OF THE PAST.

. . . Joseph Howe

Issued under the authority of
THE HONOURABLE JEAN LESAGE, Minister of
Northern Affairs and National Resources



Original Earthen Bastion of French Period

Fort Beauséjour National Historic Park

Aulac, New Brunswick

CA1
IA 71
- 2045

THE site of old Fort Beauséjour, located on the long ridge between the Aulac and Missaguash Rivers, and overlooking Chignecto Bay, forms one of the most interesting historical places in New Brunswick. The fort was originally constructed by the French between 1751 and 1755 on the orders of de la Jonquière, Governor of Canada, as a counter defence against the English Fort Lawrence, which stood on a parallel ridge about a mile and a half to the southeast. It derived its name from an early settler, Laurent Chatillon, surnamed Beauséjour, after whom the southern end of the ridge had been named Point-à-Beauséjour.

In 1755, before its actual completion, Fort Beauséjour was attacked by an expedition from Boston under the command of Colonel the Honourable Robert Monckton. Landing at the mouth of the Missaguash River, the English force, which numbered about 2,000 New Englanders, encamped at Fort Lawrence before marching on the fort, being joined there by 300 British regulars. Following the capture of an outpost at Pont à Buot, heavy guns and mortars were landed from the boats, gun-emplacements were dug over 800 yards north of the fort, and a heavy fire was opened on the fortifications by the batteries. The garrison worked feverishly in strengthening their defences. Assistance expected from Louisbourg failed to arrive, and after an English prisoner named Hay had been killed by an exploding shell in what was considered a bomb-proof casemate, the garrison under de Vergor surrendered.

Following its capture, the fort was occupied by English troops, and re-named Fort Cumberland by its captor, Monckton. The defences of the fort were greatly strengthened, including the construction of an outer earthworks and a stone powder magazine. During the American Revolution of 1776 the fort withstood an attack by a force under Colonel Jonathan Eddy, which was repulsed by the garrison in command of Colonel Joseph Goreham. Repairs were made to the fort during the war of 1812-14, but later the garrison was withdrawn and the place allowed to fall into ruins.

In 1926 an area of 59 acres, containing what remained of the fort, was set aside as a National Historic Park, and the original name, Fort Beauséjour, was adopted. Since that time, work has been carried on for the purpose of checking the destructive processes caused by long years of neglect, and of making the entire area more accessible to visitors.

Suitable memorials have been erected to commemorate important events associated with the fort. Historic points of interest have been restored and marked, roads and footpaths constructed, a picnic pavilion and a community building erected for the use of visitors, and a residence built for the custodian of the Park.

The original pentagonal earthworks are still in a remarkable state of preservation, and one of the former casemates or bomb-proof shelters has been partially restored. About 400 yards north of the fort is a remarkable system of entrenchments. Until recently this system has been described as "Monckton's Lines", believed to have been used by the British in their attack on the fort in 1755, but plans of the engineer Brewse, in Windsor Castle library, show that Monckton's Lines were situated at a considerable distance to the north of these works, and were much smaller and simpler. It is, therefore, certain that the elaborate trench system just described was developed by the British as an advanced line of defence for Fort Cumberland.

In view of its outstanding historical importance, the site of the lines of attack and of the adjacent blockhouse, comprising about twenty acres, was donated to the Crown in 1942, by the late Dr. J. Clarence Webster, C.M.G., of Shediac, New Brunswick, former Chairman of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, and Honorary Curator of Fort Beauséjour.

In 1935 a fireproof museum building was erected by the Canadian Government, near the entrance to the fort grounds. The official opening of the museum was held with appropriate ceremony on August 1, 1936, in the presence of several thousand people.

Since the museum was first built, two wings have been added—the first in 1938 and the second, the "John Clarence Webster Wing", in 1949. The museum contains a large and important collection of exhibits relating to the civil and military history of Chignecto and the neighboring counties of Westmorland and Albert, in New Brunswick, and Cumberland, in Nova Scotia. It also houses a comprehensive library of books and documents relating to this area, together with others, on various subjects written by Canadian-born authors.

Space does not permit mention of more than a few of the exhibits, but the following brief descriptive notes will indicate their wide variety and interest:—

On a high stand in the centre of the Main Museum room hangs a beautiful bronze bell. It once hung in the steeple of the Church of Beauséjour, built by the Abbé Le Loutre, after the fort was commenced. At the beginning of the siege in 1755, the church and other outlying buildings were burned by order of the Commandant. The church bell was saved and preserved. It remained in the district undamaged for many years, and, finally, when Mount Whatley Church was built, the old bell was acquired for use in it. When the Museum was built at Fort Beauséjour the Church of St. Mark's was requested to donate the bell to the Museum, a new bell being offered in its place. The congregation generously responded, and, now, their gift is one of the outstanding features among the exhibits in the Museum. The bell measures about 20 inches in extreme height, and 22 in diameter at the bottom. It is beautifully modelled, and ornamented with lines and ridges, and on one side are three fleurs de lys in relief, arranged in a triangle. Near the top a raised band of scrollwork extends around the bell, and below this is an inscription of raised letters in a single line: AD HONOREM DEI FECIT F M GROS A ROCHEFORT 1734.

Large oil painting of Amos Seaman, of Minudie, Nova Scotia. This remarkable man was a prominent figure in the mid-eighteenth century. He was born at Lumley Hill Farm, Lower Maccan Road, across the river from Minudie, Cumberland County, Nova Scotia, in 1787, and at the age of twelve was sent to Boston to commence a business career. In a very few years he owned a fleet of vessels trading in all parts of the world, built up a large business in Boston, and accumulated money very quickly. He bought the huge property which had been granted to J. F. W. Des Barres at Minudie, about 8,000 acres, half of which were the Elysian Fields, and, at once, started agricultural developments on a large scale. He helped many struggling and distressed people and was beloved by all who had dealings with him. It is not surprising that he was everywhere known as "King" Seaman. He died in 1864.

Crucifix of the 17th century, hand made, the base and figure of Christ being made out of ox-bones. It belonged to the family of the Sieur de Beauséjour, after which the elevation on which the fort was built was named. This relic is, undoubtedly, the oldest known relating to Chignecto. It is the Jansénist type of crucifix.

Twelve Marriage Licenses on Official Forms, issued between 1793 and 1803. Signed and sealed by Thos. Carleton, Lieut.-Governor, and by Jonathen Odell, Provincial Secretary. The earliest statutes of New Brunswick made no provision for the issuance of marriage licences. This was evidently made in Section 75 of the Instructions to Governor Carleton, as follows:—

“And to the end that the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Lord Bishop of London may take place in our Province under your Government so far as conveniently may be, we do think fit that you do give all countenance and encouragement to the exercise of same, excepting only the Collating of Benefices, granting licences for Marriages, and Probate of Wills which we have reserved to you, Our Governor, and to the Commander in Chief of Our said Province for the time being”.

Wooden panel, with carved decorative design, from the pulpit of the first church built in 1782 by Abbé Joseph-Thomas-François Le Roux, and destroyed by fire in 1795. This is one of very few remaining examples of interior church decoration of the early Acadian period. This church was built by Acadians who had returned after the expulsion; it had a thatched roof. It was erected on the west side of the Memramcook River. The first settlement, with its small church, had been built on the opposite side, but was destroyed in 1755.

Old carronade, originally fired with a linstock, and meant for grapeshot. The vent was bushed for the regulation friction tube. It has long been in Amherst, and during the Boer War fired salutes at the relief of Ladysmith, Mafeking, and Kimberley.

Historical record of the posterity of William Black, who settled in this country in 1775; also, a sketch of 23 English families and some early settlers from New England. By Cyrus Black, 1885.

In the transactions of the Royal Society, 1933, is a paper by Dr. J. C. Webster, describing a remarkable artificial formation on the La Coupe River, a branch of the Aulac, which opens into Cumberland Basin near the mouth of the Tanthamar. Just opposite the southern end of Jolicure ridge there is a curious arrangement of massive walls of earth forming an irregular quadrilateral elevation straddling the La Coupe River. A thorough study of this formation makes clear that it was originally a dock with gates, meant for the repair, construction and storage of vessels and boats in the early French days. They could be floated up from the Bay of Fundy on a rising tide, which at the dock must have been at least 20 feet in height (38' to 45' at Cumberland Basin). The statements of the oldest inhabitants indicate that, up to the first part of the 19th century, massive timbers held up the high banks of earth at the site of the dock-gates. These have since rotted away and considerable earth has fallen down into the bed of the river, which is now merely a stream, owing to the reclamation of the marshes by aboiteaux in lower parts of the Aulac River. A survey has been made by competent engineers and several aerial photographs have been taken by the Royal Canadian Air Force, the results of which are shown in photo-drawings displayed in the museum.

The site of this Early French Dry Dock was donated to the Government by the late Dr. J. C. Webster.

Coat of Arms of H.M.C.S. *Whitby*, carved by Mrs. E. R. Hart of Mount Allison University Art School, Sackville, and painted by Professor Stanley Royle, late of the Art School.

Coat of Arms of H.M.C.S. *Moncton*, carved by Albert Nadeau, St. François, Madawaska County.

Both these ships saw service in the Second World War. The Coats of Arms were presented to the museum by the Royal Canadian Navy.

The Museum is open to the public daily, including Sundays.

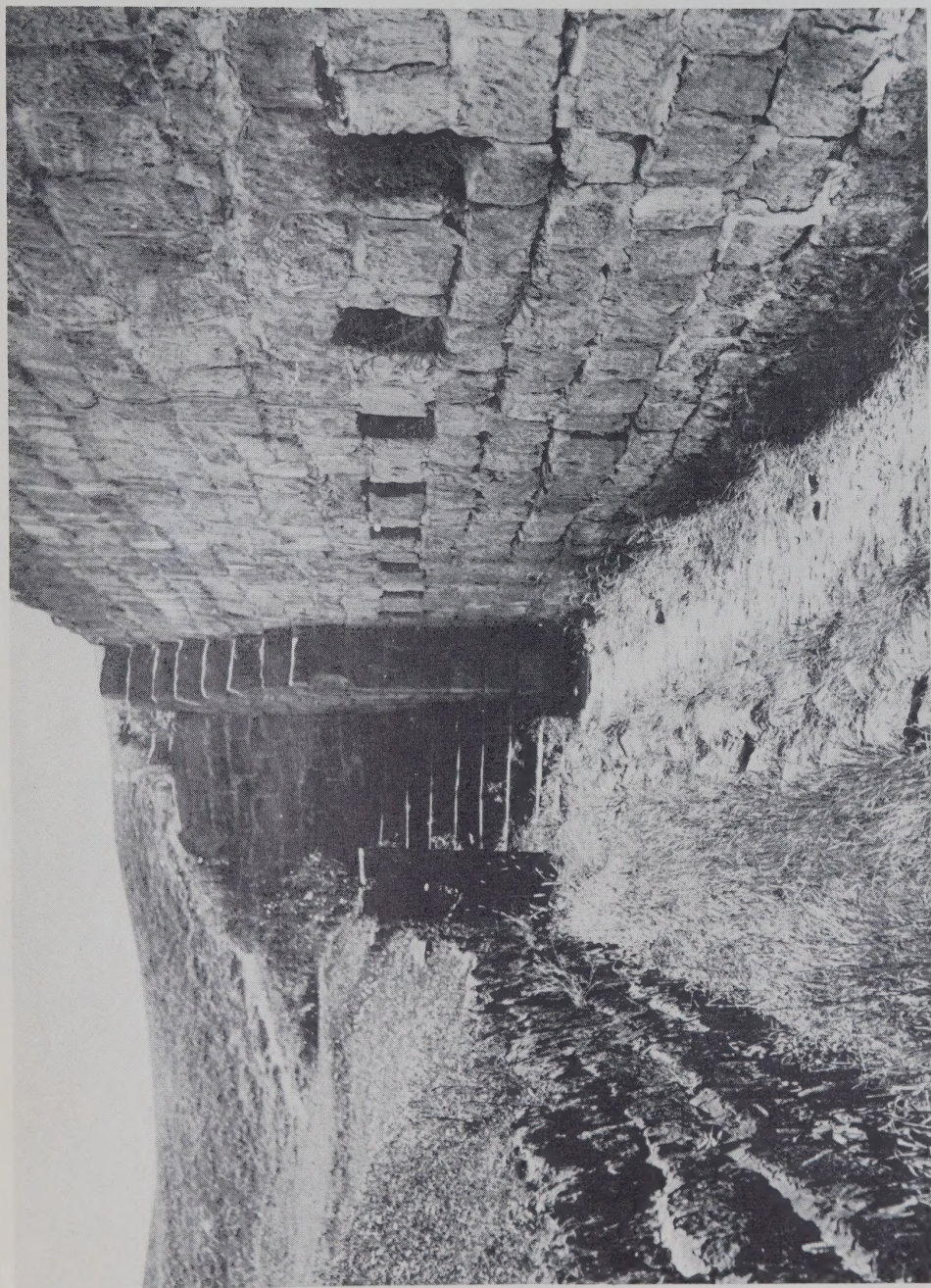


John Clarence Webster Wing

NATIONAL PARKS BRANCH

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL RESOURCES

Ottawa, Canada



Interior of Old Fort showing Loop-holed Curtain Wall

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OTTAWA
EDMOND CLOUTIER, C.M.G., O.A., D.S.P.,
QUEEN'S PRINTER AND CONTROLLER OF STATIONERY
1954